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BOOK REVIEWS

THE BROMPTON HOSPITAL. The Story
of a Great Adventure.

M. Davidson, Consulting Physician to the
Hospital, and F. G. Rouvray, Late House
Governor. 152 pp. illust. 21/-. Lloyd-Luke
(Medical Books) Ltd., London, 1954.

Everyone even remotely connected with chest diseases must have heard of that grand old London institution, the Brompton Hospital. Two lovers of this Victorian foundation—Dr. Maurice Davidson, a well-known British chest physician, and F. G. Rouvray, a former house governor—have now completed the enjoyable task of recording its history from its foundation in 1841 to its incorporation in the National Health Service of the U.K. in 1948. They tell their story well and in language suited to the layman as well as the physician.

The Brompton Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest owed its inception, like many other great charitable enterprises, to the dynamic personality of a public-spirited individual. Sir Philip Ross, a London lawyer, tried to secure the admission to hospital of a poor consumptive clerk in his employ and found that no general hospital would admit a consumptive. He therefore called a private meeting in his house, and urged the foundation by subscription of a hospital for the treatment of chest disease and for the study of pulmonary tuberculosis. His personality must have been strong, for within a year an outpatient department had started work, and in 18 months his hospital opened its doors to the first inpatient. It is interesting to note that the Visiting Physicians visited in their homes such of their patients as were too ill to come to hospital—an anticipation of a present-day trend. When the hospital had to be rebuilt and expanded in 1844, a site at Brompton was chosen, in the midst of fields and gardens; now it lies in the heart of London. The Brompton staff were the first in England to obtain the benefit of a sanatorium—first at Bournemouth (1855), later at Frimley. When the second big expansion of the hospital was undertaken in 1879, great financial aid was obtained from the legacy of an eccentric maiden lady with the delightful name of Miss Cordelia Angelica Read, who behaved in character by leaving her will in the drawer of an old spinet.

The authors trace the development of teaching from its beginning in 1894 to the opening of the Institute of Diseases of the Chest in 1949, of research from the first investigations of childhood tuberculosis in 1930, and of thoracic surgery from its beginning after World War I. The other activity for which the Hospital is well known—the publication of the *Brompton Hospital Reports*—began in 1932.

The history of a hospital is not an easy thing to write, unless some scandalous behaviour on the part of the staff can be dug up to season the tale. No breath of scandal has ever touched the Brompton (so far as our authors tell us), but the present history is anything but dull, is well laid out and illustrated, and will certainly be treasured by any who have ever set foot in this splendid old institution. The publishers deserve a word of commendation for the excellent standard of production.

THE DOCTOR WRITES

An Anthology of the Unusual in Current Medical Literature. Edited by S. O. Waife, Associate in Medicine, Indiana University Medical School. 175 pp. \$4.00. Grune & Stratton, New York; The Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1954.

This is a sort of bedside anthology of writings by medical men on unusual themes. Dr. Waife, the editor, might use as a preface the remark attributed to Abrams in the anthology, "I have gathered a posy of other men's flowers, and nothing but the thread that binds them is mine own." The subjects range over a wide field. Sherlock Holmes as a dermatologist opens the series with some quick diagnoses of odd skin conditions. A psychoanalyst

then discusses the anomaly of the all-powerful queen in a chess set of warring males. We pass to a discussion of the orthodoxy and heterodoxy of Abrams.

So the book ranges on from such topics as a criticism of the superior clinical acumen of the older physicians, through a remarkable account of the pregnancy of Doll Tearsheet and a discussion of the problem of multiple authorship to a very serious-minded address on *caritas medici*. In general, the reviewer preferred the lighter essays—pleasant reading matter for the close of the day.

ADVANCES IN INTERNAL MEDICINE

Edited by W. Dock, Long Island College of Medicine, Brooklyn, and I. Snapper, Beth-El Hospital, Brooklyn. 375 pp. illust. Vol. VI. \$10.00. The Year Book Publishers, Inc.; Burns & MacEachern, Toronto 2, 1954.

The editors have produced a volume of the same excellent quality as its predecessors. Each author has succeeded in giving us a comprehensive and authoritative survey. It will be possible to consider only a few of the ten subjects: uropepsin; glucagon, the hyperglycaemic-glycogenolytic hormone of the pancreas; diagnosis of cancer of internal organs by the Papanicolaou technique; spatial vectorcardiography; the L.E. cell phenomenon; biopsy studies of the liver and kidney; thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura; porphyria; diaphragmatic hernia; the determination of insulin in blood.

In discussing the L.E. cell phenomenon Hargraves presents probably the most complete review of the subject yet published. The article on porphyria by Watson gives us a classification based on newer knowledge of the sites of abnormal porphyrin formation, as well as a discussion of the subject from both the chemical and

clinical points of view. Grishman in a very good review indicates some of the practical possibilities of spatial vectorcardiography. The discussion of thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura by Singer is clear and authoritative. Evidence is presented which indicates that the disease is probably primarily an affection of the capillaries with secondary haematological, neurological, and constitutional manifestations. The disease has heretofore been considered extremely rare, but it is likely that the diagnosis has often been missed; this review should serve as a useful reminder of the existence of the syndrome.

This volume will prove of value to practising physicians as well as to those primarily interested in medical research.

HEART. A Physiological and Clinical Study of Cardiovascular Diseases.

A. A. Luisada, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director, Division of Cardiology, at the Chicago Medical School, under a Teaching Grant of the National Heart Institute, U.S. Public Health Service. 680 pp. illust. 2nd ed. \$15.00. The Williams & Wilkins Co., Baltimore; Burns & MacEachern, Toronto 2, 1954.

The first edition in 1948 of this highly personal account of the heart and its disorders was favourably received. No doubt this second edition will enjoy the same reception. Dr. Luisada has brought his book up to date, and also rearranged his material, including new chapters on cardiovascular syphilis (a brief statement), prognosis in cardiovascular disease, and the social and legal aspects of heart disease. In the last-named chapter, the theme of rehabilitation of cardiac patients might have been developed more. A number of chapters have been rewritten; among them are the chapters on congenital heart disease, cor pulmonale, coronary disease, heart failure and therapeutics. It seems a pity that in his appendix on prescriptions Dr. Luisada should so often recommend proprietary drugs without sometimes even listing their non-proprietary names or indicating that there is any alternative to the preparation he recommends.

The illustrations to the text are excellent and numerous. This new edition should continue to be useful to senior students and general physicians.

CORONARY HEART DISEASE IN YOUNG ADULTS

M. M. Gertler, P. D. White, and others. 218 pp. illust. \$5.50. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.; S. J. Reginald Saunders and Company Ltd., Toronto 1, 1954.

This 200-page monograph presents the findings of a three-year research project at the Massachusetts General Hospital for significant clues to the etiology of coronary heart disease. The need for this is known without large-scale statistics, and intensive study of the subject is relatively recent.

The project was on 100 patients under the age of 40 at the time of myocardial infarction, who had been examined before the age of 50 and at least six months after the lesion. Cases were free of complicating conditions such as hypertension, metabolic disturbances or chronic infections. Patients were referred from the Eastern United States. A similar number of controls were matched as to age, height, weight, body build, race and occupation. Clinical appraisals were strikingly normal.

Studies were made of heredity, race, physique and morphological characteristics, athletic activity and occupation, masculinity, thyroid and testicular-adrenal function, using 24-hour urinary excretion of 17-ketosteroids; biochemical findings included cholesterol, lipid phosphorus (with their ratio), uric acid, diet and oxidation-reduction potentials of saliva.

Noteworthy was the breakdown of physique into the somatotypes of endomorphy, mesomorphy and ectomorphy, and the correlation of these with raised uric

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acid and cholesterol levels in the blood. The findings, firstly that the individual under 40 most likely to experience myocardial infarction is an endomorphic mesomorph, i.e. a fat muscular person, and secondly that endomorphs with coronary heart disease have a higher blood uric acid and all types with such disease have a higher total cholesterol blood level, are suggested as a means of preselecting individuals prone to coronary disease.

While no specific facts were elucidated, the authors endeavoured to show that statistically it should be possible to preselect individuals prone to coronary disease from the population. While such selections mean little for one individual, and to date nothing can be offered to delay the episode, these facts should not deter the pursuit of data from daily clinical observations, or the planned programme of detailed biochemical and animal research.

ACUTE ANURIA

- C. Brun. 215 pp. illust. D. kr. 30.00. Ejnar Munksgaard, Copenhagen, 1954.

This monograph summarizes past concepts and presents current views concerning acute tubulo-interstitial nephritis or lower nephron nephrosis. The author develops the theme historically, dividing subject into pre-World War I, World War I, inter-War, World War II and post-War II stages. The post-War II publications reviewed include those of Lucké, McManus, Bell, Allen, Zollinger and Oliver, that of the last named being set out in fair detail.

The etiological factors in this type of kidney damage are classified and the pathogenesis of acute renal failure in these conditions is discussed. Renal function in this condition is described both according to the assessment of other workers and to that of the author in his own

32 cases, which he followed up for periods of six to 12 months. Besides biochemical investigation and clinical observation of these 32 cases, pathological evidence is produced from aspiration biopsy and autopsy material.

The conservative treatment of this condition is described with local modifications, and the methods of dialysis are compared. Complications with their management are also discussed.

The cause and treatment of pulmonary oedema, it is pointed out, remains unsolved. Dr. Brun feels that when this can be successfully avoided or treated, the mortality from this condition will be substantially lowered.

The appendices give details of renal function tests, kidney biopsies and case reports. The monograph, which is excellent for those interested, concludes with an ample alphabetically arranged bibliography.

SYMPOSIUM ON SEDATIVE AND HYPNOTIC DRUGS

Held under the auspices of the Miles-Ames Research Laboratory and Sumner Research Laboratory, Elkhart, Indiana. 111 pp. illust. \$3.50. The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore; Burns & MacEachern, Toronto 2, 1954.

Many questions relating to the manufacture, effects and use of sedatives and hypnotics are asked in this symposium which brings together experts in all fields where sedatives are produced, investigated and prescribed. Few of the questions are answered and the clinician will find little that is of value to him. The experimentalist on the other hand will find much that is stimulating and informative. The text will find its greatest use in pharmacological and physiological laboratories.

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